

Rawlins Field Office Planning Area Resource Management Plan And Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Lead Agency:

Bureau of Land Management
Rawlins Field Office
Rawlins, Wyoming

Cooperating Agencies:

State of Wyoming
Albany, Carbon and Sweetwater Counties,
Wyoming
Little Snake Conservation District
Medicine Bow Conservation District
Saratoga-Encampment-Riverside Conservation

District

Sweetwater Conservation District

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Abstract

This Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) addresses the comprehensive analysis of alternatives for the planning and management of public lands and resources administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in southcentral and southwestern Wyoming. The Rawlins Field Office (RFO) includes approximately 11.2 million acres of land in Albany, Carbon, Laramie and Sweetwater counties. Within that area, the RFO administers approximately 3.4 million acres of public land surface and mineral estate, 0.1 million acres of public land surface where the mineral estate is private, and 1.2 million acres of federal mineral estate where the surface is privately owned or state owned. The plan focuses primarily on eight resource management issues: development of energy resources and minerals; special management designations; resource accessibility; wildland-urban interface; special status species; water quality; vegetation management; and recreation, cultural and paleontological resources.

Four alternatives that address each issue have been considered for the Rawlins Resource Management Plan planning area (RMPPA): the No Action Alternative, Alternative 1- Continuation of Existing Management direction; and three action alternatives; Alternative 2 - Emphasis on the Development of Resources; Alternative 3 - Emphasis on Protection of Resources; and Alternative 4 - Preferred Alternative. The No Action Alternative or continuation of existing management direction includes management actions presented in the Great Divide RMP (November 1990) as well as revised direction and policy developed since the completion of the Great Divide RMP. The three action alternatives were developed to present a range of management options. To guide decision making for managing uses and activities within the RMPPA, the BLM's preferred alternative, Alternative 4 is a combination of Alternatives 1, 2, and 3. All alternatives studied in detail focus on allocating resources to a variety of public land uses and prescribing general management actions that would be taken in the future. The impacts that would be expected from implementing each of the alternatives are presented in Chapter 4.

In its final form this document will provide a comprehensive framework for managing and allocating resources on the public lands in the Rawlins Field Office. The Wyoming State Director is the BLM's Authorized Officer for preparing this Draft EIS and subsequently the Final EIS.